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Der moderne Hypnotismus, ein kritisches Essay. Prof. SEELIGMÜLLER.
Deutsche Med. Wochenschr., Jan. 5 and 12, 1888.

These articles constitute the beginning of a series as yet incomplete. The first is chiefly occupied with an account of the work of Bourru and Burot (reported above). The second shows that the experiments with drugs at a distance (which were sometimes applied without wrapper, sometimes in paper, in open, now in closed, now in corked tubes stopped with various waxes, gums, etc., and now hermetically sealed), were more quickly and intensely successful the less the substance tested was closed. The greater the dose, the greater the effect. At first no difference was made between odorous and non-odorous substances. With some subjects it is, with others it is not, important to which part of the body the application is made. There seems to be no education, and the first experiments are usually best. The precautions are shown to be often ridiculously inadequate. Ether is said to cause fascination, for a very intelligent lady who had experienced it assured the Rochefort sages that this was the case, etc. The conclusion here reached respecting nearly all the experiments on the action of drugs at a distance is that they have been made "with an ignorance, a prejudice, and a lack of common sense unprecedented in the history of modern medicine." If an experiment does not succeed, it is a new and unexpected effect, revealing, perhaps, a hitherto unknown property of the drug, or some other new explanation is at once proffered.

De la suggestion, et de ses applications à la thérapeutique. H. BERNHEIM,
professeur à la Faculté de Médecine de Nancy. Deuxième édition.
Paris, 1888, 596 pp.

This we regard as on the whole the most scientific of the many works that have appeared in France within the present decade upon this subject, and we deem it a matter of serious regret that writers representing this method and standpoint were not chosen by the publishers of the International Scientific Series to present the subject to English and American writers, in preference to such thoroughgoing partisans of the school of Charcot, which, after its great service in giving a memorable impulse to studies in this field by introducing a new ideal of scientific method, has been latterly so reluctant to accept the far better methods and results of Nancy, that discredit, not only for the Paris school but for this field, is imminent. The study of hypnotic phenomena at Nancy, which, began on the present lines by Liebeault, a student hardly less diligent and sagacious than Braid himself, and who had the advantage of coming after that investigator, has led to very different conclusions respecting hypnotism from those reached at Paris or Toulon. The school of Nancy believes that the so-called physical phenomena of hypnotism, including those of Charcot's three states, are purely psychic, that hypnotic sleep is the same as natural sleep, and that in the latter the same phenomena can be obtained as in hypnosis artificially induced in the same subjects, even catalepsy, hallucinations, transfer, contracture, and automatic movements, etc., all appearing on suggestion; that hallucinations are only suggested dreams, and dreams are only spontaneous hallucinations; that without suggestion hypnotic subjects remain torpid and inert, and really in natural slumber; that hypnotism is therefore not pathologic and has no necessary affinity with hysteria; that hys-

terical phenomena are often developed either spontaneously from the too common association with magnetism and hysterical manifestations in the subject's mind, or else suggested more or less unconsciously by this association in the mind of the operator; that no one can be hypnotized unless he has the idea he is to be, so that the sleep itself is an effect of suggestion, and, like all its phenomena whatever, is due not to magnetic or any fluidic influence, or to any physical stimulus or manipulation, but solely to psychic impressions. Experiments where the conditions have rigidly excluded suggestion have not succeeded at Nancy. Bernheim has tried "with hundreds of subjects" to produce transference of thought without suggestion, such as Gibert of Havre, Mr. Myers of London, Perronet, Ochorowicz, Janet and others in France, think they have obtained, but in vain. These phenomena and the action of drugs at a distance, if they be real, are facts of an entirely different order from those obtainable here. Bernheim believes that suggestibility exists in the normal waking state, but that it is neutralized or repressed by reason, attention and judgment. In sleep these faculties are enfeebled, impressions are accepted without control and transformed into movements and images. This psychic modality or new consciousness makes the brain more docile and plastic to suggestion, and more apt to react on the functions and organs either by inhibition or dynamogenesis. It is this aptitude, exalted by suggestion, that is effectively utilized for therapeutic ends. The supposed action of drugs at a distance is thus explained. The subject concentrates all his disposable nervous energy upon organs on which attention is focused to divine, with extremely hyper-aesthetic sense, what the experimenters wish to obtain. Knowing that they are to get the effects of a substance in a sealed bottle, they begin with vague symptoms, like malaise, anxiety, agitation, nausea, which are effects common to most poisons—alcohol, opium, emetic, valerian, etc.

If among those present knowing the substance some one is struck by the first manifestations and translates their sentiments into words, the cue is instantly seized. If there are no words, then the physiognomy, gestures, the least index of approval or disapproval, are eagerly sought and divined with amazing acuteness; and if all these are absent, and even no one, not even the experimenter, knows, and all subtle odors are effectually eliminated, the experiment fails. Upon this conception of the nature of these phenomena, it is said therapeutics is best able to utilize what is claimed as one of the most important conquests of contemporary medical science.

Bernheim tells a new subject that he or she is to be put to simple normal sleep. It is well if the subject has first seen others hypnotized to see how simple and perhaps helpful it may be. He uses the command "sleep" after describing to them optical symptoms of sleep which he assures them they feel; but if they do not sleep, they are assured that sleep is not useful for hypnotic effects. Some subjects fixate first and then the eyes close, or are closed by the operator, and thus the image or suggestion of sleep is insinuated into the brain. Passes, fixation, etc., are not absolutely necessary, but serve only to concentrate the attention. The operator continues to say in ever lower tones, "You feel heaviness in the eyes and torpor in the limbs, the nervous system grows calm, sleep is coming," etc. With others a more brusque, authoritative method must be employed; with others the idea of being chloroformed was effective, or a few sniffs of chloroform, alone quite ineffective, cause sleep with the aid

of suggestion. It is not neuropathic or hysterical persons who make the best subjects or who are less apt to react by contra-suggestion, but those accustomed to obey passively. In place of the six theoretic stages of hypnotism by Liebeault, beginning with heaviness of the eyelids, and ending with perfect somnambulic response to the operator's will, Bernheim makes nine stages, divisible into two groups. In the first stage all signs of sleep are uncertain, but there is a nervous calm in which sensations of heat can be provoked by suggestion in different parts of the body, and certain pains can be destroyed and therapeutic effects secured. Hypnotism is defined as "the provocation of a particular psychic state in which suggestibility is augmented." This state need not necessarily be sleep, for catalepsy, anaesthesia, paralysis, and hallucination can be provoked without sleep. The highest degree of hypnotism is marked by amnesia on awakening, and by the possibility of hallucinations both hypnotic and posthypnotic. The term negative hallucination, applied to cases *e. g.* where objects within the field of view become invisible by suggestion, signifies that objects perceived are neutralized by the imagination, and not as the Paris school conceives, that perception is inhibited. Hypnotic achromotopsia and amaurosis are purely psychic. The modifications of circulation and respiration which characterize hypnotism are said to be due to emotions. The phenomena of instantaneous hemorrhage on any part of the body obtained by Dr. Mabille, and by Bourru and Burot, which resemble the self-suggested stigmata of Louise Lateau, which succeed only with the most rare subjects, and which Bernheim cannot produce, must be grouped with blushing, secretions, flushes, etc., under influences as truly psychic as the effects ascribed to magnets. Transfer and many other phenomena can be produced in the waking state by suggestion, and illustrate the same order of facts as Braid described in 1846 in his pamphlet entitled *The Power of the Mind Over the Body*. Suggestion without hypnotism may also account for the insensibility to torture, caused by ecstasy in the case of martyrs and victims of the Inquisition. The Nancy school has not been able to verify either the somatic or psychic symptoms of the three stages of Charcot, but manifests the signs of somnambulism, catalepsy, or lethargy at suggestion without rubbing the vertex, opening the eyes, beating a gong, touching or blowing on the skin, etc. In fact these processes have no effect of themselves. This is the conclusion also of all the experimenters of Nancy, and even of Liebeault, who during the last twenty-five years has hypnotized more than 6000 persons. The Salpêtrière subjects, besides being all hysterical, have been a long time in the hospital, and have come to reflect a false theory, the joint product of doctors and patients. Thus the manipulations of a special culture which unintentionally suggest reactions conformable to the theory, imitative of typical reflexes in other patients, have developed in this environment a species of hypnotism that is unnatural. Again, severe hysteria (the Paris theories rest on not more than twelve cases) is very rare compared with the very many common cases on which the Nancy conception of hysteria is based. Nothing, says Bernheim, is more curious than the errors of Binet and Fére in supposing that they could rely on alleged symptoms of lethargy and catalepsy to eliminate the suggestion (the true key here also) in their experiments of transfer with the magnet. These subjects are probably not, as they think, oblivious of external influences. In lethargy *e. g.* the subject is impressed with the idea that he cannot or must not react to any stimulus or suggestion, and this state can be excited

artificially, as it were, in all patients in the somnambulistic state. In all the very many cases tried, Bernheim could never produce transfer of sensation, contractures, pains, etc., from one half of the body to the other with magnets without suggestion, but always did it with suggestion without magnets. The same is true of mixtures and complementary effects of imaginary colors, and the doubling of unreal objects by looking through a prism. The color effects are many and there is no doubling with subjects ignorant of these effects, but let them once see they are looking through a prism, or what are the effects of so doing, and what color or mixture effects occur with real images, thenceforth they exhibit all that Binet and Féré found. Tests with rotating prisms show that the fictive image does not conform to the conditions of real images. Finally he recommends these young experimenters to repeat their experiments on new subjects with new precautions, and predicts they will reach very different conclusions. The tests of Bernheim are certainly far more varied and ingenious.

The chapter on history and literature is concise and full and is brought down to date, and is perhaps the best yet written in its space. The most important chapter is probably that on interpretation. Instead of being so unique and anti-physiological as this state at first seems (C. Bernard said if these facts were true they seemed to necessitate starting over again in physiology), it is largely explicable from the well known facts of reflex action, automatism, and instinct modified by the psychic organ. A man absorbed in thought is functionally decapitated, and like a frog deprived of its hemispheres, has the reflex and mechanical functions exalted. Changes of physiognomy, gestures, inflections, and all indications of emotional play, and perhaps walking, etc., all of which may accompany speech, are both more complex and much more regulated by laws than the conscious processes involved in discourse. When preoccupied we avoid obstacles, react to noises, ours, temperature, react to many incidental stimuli by acts which, though originally free, are so no longer. Intense impressions transform themselves into automatic acts; so, on the other hand, attention need not be long absent for hypnagogic illusions to arise. The faith of the theologians, or *credibilité*, is abandonment to authoritative suggestion. It is indispensable for education, business, etc., and we have a first tendency to believe every statement, which credulity must be afterward corrected by a second, induced or native. This is akin to the cerebral docility which obeys all orders. The degrees of authority of the person who suggests, of sleepiness or concentration in the subject, and of native susceptibility, are of course many. Even the normal state presents "psychic decapitation" in a rudimentary degree. Ideas are projected or transformed as sensations.

Bernheim would explain suggestion to be carried out in waking states later, by assuming that impressions produced by artificial sleep, or provoked, are always conscious at the moment when they are produced. This consciousness, although lost on waking, can always be evoked by simple affirmation. These latent souvenirs may revive spontaneously in certain states of psychic concentration. Ideas suggested in sleep to be acted out later do not remain latent or unconscious till the moment appointed for action, as Beaunis and others have said, but may recur repeatedly in the interval. The last part of this book is devoted to the detailed description of 105 cases upon which the therapeutic effects of hypnotism have been tried at Nancy, nearly

all with success. These cases cover a great variety of complaints, mostly with nervous complications. Finally, all physicians are strongly advised to hypnotize no patient without his or her consent, to never do so save in the presence of a third person, and to suggest nothing not essential to therapeutic ends. These rules should be observed as safeguards of the physician's conscience and his professional honor.

Le somnambulisme provoqué, études physiologiques et psychologiques.
H. BEAUNIS, professeur de physiologie à la Faculté de Médecine
de Nancy. Paris, 1886, 250 pp.

This well known author introduces this work with a chapter of statistics of liability, showing that for the somnambulistic stages, concerning which tables by different observers have been most variable, the liability of the two sexes is about equal. Again, out of 744 hypnotic subjects, 23 were less than 7 years of age, and 59 were over 63 years old. That of the above total, 65 were between the ages of 7 and 14, and 87 between 14 and 21, is also significant for the possible role of hypnotization in education. Subjects were hypnotized with great care to avoid all muscular tension, and were told now that their heart beat more and more slowly, now faster and faster. The heart was made thus to vary between the extremes of 15.4 and 19.2 beats per second, the respiration rhythm remaining constant, all emotional excitement avoided, and the modification following almost immediately upon the suggestion. These observations, with facts like the famous Townsend case, that of Dr. Fothergill and the cases gathered by Tarchanoff, seem to show that in some subjects the will can act directly in retarding and perhaps accelerating the pulse, and suggest therapeutic effects, already found salutary in a few cases, in palpitation and other cardiac neuroses. Like Mabille, Dumontpallier and Focachon, Beaunis believes he has produced circumscribed cutaneous congestion, with local increase of temperature, passing to measurable swelling, and even vesication on the skin (generally of the forearm), by suggestion only. Dynamometric force in most cases (162 in 242) was reduced during provoked sleep. Hypnotic suggestion probably (the experiments are too few here to be conclusive) increases the acuteness of hearing, and reduces the reaction time for both tactile and auditory sensations.

In his interesting chapter on the nature of suggestion, and on spontaneity in the somnambulic state, the author shows himself in the main in accord with the other members of the school of Nancy. The theory of concentrated attention as represented by Braid, Carpenter, and Liebeault, is probably one of the most helpful phrases, but really explains little till we know more about what attention is. The conception of Durand de Gros (Dr. Philips) has the merit of trying to go deeper by suggesting that thought activity is reduced to its simple and isolated elements, so that mental action is suspended save at one point, while the nervous force accumulates to the point of congestion in the brain in general, and can be turned with unusually high pressure on to any organ or mode of action—this displacement by suggestion being termed ideo-plasticity. Beaunis says the primordial fact is the *action of arrest*, which may be either sudden cerebral shock, or gradual. In this state there is little or nothing in the mind which is not suggested immediately through the senses. The style of this book is clearness itself, and the material is well and conveniently grouped.